

NCRA Site Visit on Friday, June 24, 2016 by Adrienne Klein

I visited the road repair project site at low tide today. I took all of the attached photos. While at the site, I was approached by Ellen (Armstrong?) who shared her knowledge of the area.

According to Ellen, there was no culvert or road at this location in the 1970s. She stated that the slough channel was unimpeded until a fairly large culvert was installed in the 1980s.

Before the road repair occurred in March, the width of the road was quite a bit narrower and the top of the road was quite a bit lower. The tides used to wash over the top of the road twice a day. That's apparently what caused the road to wash out. Ellen says that SMART annually added a pile of gravel to replace the material washed away by the regular overtopping. As a result of being higher, the hydrology in the neighborhood has been affected. The top of the road (and beams) is now higher than the daily high tides.

As a result of being wider (by about 6 feet on the east side), the Bay and tidal marsh has been filled. She says the old culvert was larger and there is less water flow now. The 3 wooden cross beams are held in place by two metal posts that are about 30 feet long and drilled into place with a crane. Rock and other nonnative material is visible in the mud in front of the new structure.

Ellen informed me that the automation project has been completed. Upon inspection, I observed that the box is located on a metal post that has been drilled into the mud below.

After speaking with Ellen, I met Jim Armstrong who stated that SMART has placed fill along the edge of the trestle and buried tidal marsh as a result.

Both Ellen and Jim said the road is only needed to access the red house on the other side of the RR tracks. That did seem to be the case, especially now that the automation is in place. Theoretically, the RR could park at the corner of Blackpoint Road and Harbor Drive and walk to the end of the trestle. It's farther than walking from the other end of Harbor Drive.

In the event that mitigation is required, there is some driftwood and a piece of plywood in the marsh next to the tracks. I also wonder if some of the abandoned walkways out to the river front from the residences could be removed as fill mitigation? To this end, I have emailed Nicholas LaVoie at SLC.





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